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National Newsletter: Literacy

Information and resources for leaders of literacy in secondary schools | Term 1 2013

Greetings from the literacy team

Welcome to the first newsletter for 2013. Through this newsletter we provide a national overview of secondary literacy, share and discuss issues relevant to our community as they arise, and provide information and links to relevant materials and resources. In this issue we outline the UE literacy requirement, outline new workshops on offer for literacy leaders, provide some insight into writing across learning areas, and take a closer look at vocabulary within Science. We look forward to ongoing contact with our literacy communities.

Kind regards
Denise, Irene and Mal

University Entrance literacy requirement

From 2014, new requirements apply for University Entrance. Students must meet a new literacy requirement to enter into university-level programmes from 2015. (See [SecQual 2012/026](#) for further details). Students must now achieve 10 credits in literacy instead of 8, and these credits can be gained through identified achievement standards from across the curriculum.

The literacy requirement for the new University Entrance from 2014 is 10 credits at NCEA **Level 2 or above** made up of: 5 credits in reading and 5 credits in writing.

This link to the [identified standards](#) lists the NCEA Level 2 and 3 achievement standards that can contribute to the new University Entrance literacy requirement. Note that the change occurs *from* 2014. Students in Year 13 this year, or those intending to enter university in 2014, are not affected by the changes – they need to meet the current requirements.

Universities will accept University Entrance once awarded, regardless of the year that students begin tertiary study. This applies to students who gain University Entrance in 2013 (meeting all requirements) and do not immediately proceed to tertiary study in 2014.

Students who are in Year 12 this year (who intend to enter university in 2015) will work towards meeting the new requirement of 10 literacy credits.

More information

See details regarding changes: [SecQual 2012/026](#)

[List of standards](#) contributing towards UE Literacy requirements.

Secondary literacy national co-ordination team

Denise Hitchcock

Te Tapuae o Rehua
denise.hitchcock@otago.ac.nz
M: 021 912 947

Mal Thompson

Te Tapuae o Rehua
mal.thompson@otago.ac.nz
M: 021 1901 400

Irene Andersen

The University of Auckland
irene.andersen@auckland.ac.nz
M: 027 588 0442

Regional facilitators

Northern and Central North regions

Siliva Gaugatao

The University of Auckland
s.gaugatao@auckland.ac.nz

Helen Panayiodou

The University of Auckland
h.panayiodou@auckland.ac.nz

Mary Libby

The University of Auckland
m.libby@auckland.ac.nz

Alana Madgwick

The University of Auckland
a.madgwick@auckland.ac.nz

Regional facilitators

Central South and Southern regions

Ross Palmer

Te Tapuae o Rehua
Ross.Palmer@canterbury.ac.nz

(plus **Denise Hitchcock** and **Mal Thompson**, Te Tapuae o Rehua).

National workshops for literacy leaders

Workshops will focus on literacy leaders supporting middle leaders in subject-specific literacy practices

These national workshops are intended for literacy leaders who have a role to play in the literacy professional learning and development of middle leaders across all learning areas, in order to raise student achievement. There will be a focus in the workshops on the new model of subject-specific literacy professional learning and development, with a particular emphasis on literacy learning in years 11-13. Two workshops will be offered in the locations listed below – workshop one in term one, and workshop two in term three.

Location	Workshop 1	Workshop 2
Northland	March 5 th	August 13 th
Auckland	March 8 th	August 14 th
Hamilton	March 11 th	August 5 th
Tauranga	March 12 th	August 6 th
Taupo	March 13 th	August 7 th
Gisborne	March 19 th	August 27 th
Napier/Hastings	March 21 st	August 29 th
Taranaki	March 14 th	August 21 st
Palmerston North	March 15 th	August 22 nd
Wellington	March 19 th	September 3 rd
Nelson	March 8 th	September 10 th
Christchurch	March 5 th	August 28 th
Greymouth	March 19 th	September 3 rd
Dunedin	March 14 th	August 23 rd
Invercargill	March 11 th	August 26 th

These workshops are funded by the Ministry of Education through its support of the Secondary Student Achievement initiative. The workshops will be free of charge with morning tea provided. Participants will need to provide their own lunch.

More details available soon. For Northland/Auckland/Central North region inquiries, please email:

Irene Andersen irene.andersen@auckland.ac.nz

For Central South region or South Island enquiries, please email:

Denise Hitchcock denise.hitchcock@otago.ac.nz

Mal Thompson mal.thompson@otago.ac.nz

NCEA: Helping students to improve their writing in a learning area context

Many learning area middle leaders and teachers have commented that a number of realigned NCEA standards require students to have greater skills in writing responses, asking for support in identifying the kinds of practices that improve students' writing.

Graham and Perin (2007) came up with a list of 10 instructional practices that improve the quality of student writing. These include teaching adolescents strategies for planning, revising and editing their work (especially powerful for struggling writers), summarising material to improve their ability to concisely and accurately presenting information in writing, as well as how to write increasingly complex sentences. Their practices also include helping students set clear and specific goals for writing (e.g. purpose of the writing and features required); providing teachers with PLD in how to integrate into their programme opportunities to write, plan and edit, and involving adolescents in writing activities that will sharpen their skills of inquiry. Engaging adolescents in activities that help them gather and organise ideas for writing before they have to write, and giving access to good models which become the focus of instruction, are also seen as important.

Useful links and resources

Secondary Literacy Online



<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Secondary-Literacy>

This is the link for literacy across learning areas. Here you will find resources of interest to teachers and literacy leaders.

Literacy Unit Standards

[NZQA resource page for Literacy Unit Standards](#)

Here you find resources to assist in the planning, implementation and assessment of the literacy unit standards.

Secondary Middle Leaders

<http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Secondary-middle-leaders>

This site provides a range of information, tools, and resources to support secondary middle leaders as they lead change in relation to *The New Zealand Curriculum* and [Ministry of Education priorities](#).

NCEA



<http://ncea.tki.org.nz/>

Resources to support internal and external assessment.

Examples from Practice

[Creating a positive learning culture](#)

Kathryn Hutchison from Wellington East Girls' College discusses how she creates a positive learning culture. She explains how exemplars, modeling, collaboration, and learning conversations are integral to helping students learn how to learn.

Some practices are easier to implement in learning areas than others. For example, many teachers already know that using word processing has a positive effect on the quality of students' writing. However, in relation to teaching adolescents - strategies for planning, revising and editing their work, is a challenge for teachers.

One simple way, in any learning area, is for the teacher to model the process for students using a "think aloud", where the teacher articulates his or her thinking processes as the model answer is constructed. Teachers may want to practise this, before attempting it with the class but making changes, erasing or returning to the question and starting again are all useful strategies for students to see in action.

What the "think aloud" does is make explicit the thinking processes that successful writers use. It is desirable to give students something to do as well as listen during the "think aloud". One group of students could make notes on the planning processes articulated by the teacher. Another group could make notes on the revising processes and a third group on the editing processes. After the "think aloud" model is complete, each group could meet briefly and compare their notes, then the class could split into groups of three so that each new group had a planning, revising and editing expert to share their findings. A template would be useful to help students construct their planning, revising and editing scaffold.

Further information about instructional practices can be gained from working with your school literacy leader or visit Literacy Online for further ideas.

<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Secondary-Literacy> Graham, S., & Perin, D. (2007). *Writing next: Effective strategies to improve writing of adolescents in middle and high school.*

Literacy in a learning context - science

Skills in the study of science include predicting, understanding cause and effect, understanding sequence, developing a rich vocabulary, building and activating background knowledge, and developing the ability to read and write informational text.

Vocabulary in science

Science learning involves lots of new vocabulary. A learning focus on words can be done by considering a word's morphemes. A morpheme is a meaningful part or unit of a word that can't be divided into smaller parts. It helps students to learn that words may be related if they share a morpheme. There are different types of morphemes, including root words, prefixes and suffixes. Common science words include:

Science Word	Morpheme	Related Words
photosynthesis	photo (light)	photography
thermometer	therm (heat)	thermos
microscope	micro (small)	microwave
	scope (see)	
graph	graph(write)	autograph
geology	geo (earth)	geode, geometry

There are many websites that give access to literacy activities such as the Digital Toolbox. You can adapt these to fit a topic you are teaching. Remember that you will need to model and scaffold the learning for students to build their strategies (in the head) so that they can learn independently in time.

Useful links and resources

Improving outcomes for Māori students through partnerships

<http://partnerships.ruia.educationallleaders.govt.nz/>

This is a resource that supports principals and other school leaders to improve outcomes for Māori students by working in educationally powerful partnership with whānau.

The kaupapa of the website makes it essential that school leaders and whānau use it together in a collaborative process underpinned by the principle of ako – shared, reciprocal learning in which each person contributes as both teacher and learner. This process will look different across schools.

Vocabulary links

For resources related to vocabulary instruction:

<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Teacher-needs/Teacher-Resource-Exchange/Secondary-Literacy>

<http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Teacher-needs/Reviewed-resources/Reading/Vocabulary>

<http://digitaltoolbox.wikispaces.com/Literacy+in+Science>

National newsletters

National newsletters such as this one are developed for every learning area by national co-ordinators from The University of Auckland and Te Tapuae o Rehua consortium (University of Canterbury, University of Otago and Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu). For more information about Ministry-funded professional development for secondary middle leaders, visit TKI:

<http://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Ministry-curriculum-guides/Secondary-middle-leaders/Professional-learning-and-development>